1: Messing E-5 (1953-1954)1957 MP5 Amhara MP5

423 656 supporters of the central government.

The descendants of these balbats, now educated in 423 the high schools of Addis Ababa, are being sent into even 447 the old-Amhara provinces at present, by Emperor Haile 651 Selassie, to act as salaried collectors for the central treasury ("Gemja-Bet") (so that the function of the former malkana has again come full circle, though the term is no longer used for the office). In fact, the new centralized tax-gathering has ended the office of the old, provincial "mälkäña", and they, much like the "gultäñña", can only hope to have their lands affirmed as "rest". This they can hope to achieve only if they work the lands themselves and pay tithe on produce, otherwise it may be lost to squatters. Their final security of tenure, by contract instead of vague status (they have lost the latter), will come only when the lands are measured and modern titles issued, which has not yet happened in the old-Amhara areas that resist this. The non-resistant Galla balbats of Shoa province are thus more secure in tenure, and will remain so as long as the central govern- is strong.

423 804 Measurement of land is called, traditionally, "throwing the rope" ("yaṣe gämäd"). This rope may be made of cordage, plant fibers, traditionally 40 elbow lengths long. In northern districts it is sometimes made of plaited oxhide, and called "qälad".

423 The "rope was thrown" widely in Galla lands conquered by Menelik II, Three-quarters of these lands were then divided into gashas of 80-100 acres each, and

829 pattern continues in full force even at present. As a result, the high official is as hesitant about delegating authority downward (which might build up a potential rival), as the inferior in the hierarchy fears to accept delegated authority (lest the superior repent of his grant and suspect rebellion). In consequence, daily problems, even routine ones, are regularly referred for decision to the superior in the hierarchy of government.

812 The authoritarian "literalness" which characterizes so many Amhara attitudes may at least in part be the effect of religious fundamentalism. Until recently, the "Fetha Nagast" criminal and [681] civil code was literally enforced, including the cutting off of hands for theft and of feet for rebellion. Biblical passages are interpreted literally, by the priests. In monasteries, the monks exclude the presence of even female animals such as cows.

[779] The church, sacerdotal in its concepts and rituals, does not feel that it owes an explanation to anyone; and "literalness" has remained unchallenged (except during the relatively brief Portuguese episode). In the Amhara view, there is a direct and unilateral connection between cause and effect, and paradoxes that result from such oversimplifications are ignored: e.g. the tallest obelisk at Aksum, which has fallen and broken into several large pieces, is claimed to have been "pushed" over by the Falasha Queen Judith, despite the fact that another, almost as tall, still stands nearby. [682] Homicide, especially if accidental, is blamed on the "zar̄en" spirits who pushed the murderer's hand.

• 647 Literal obedience dominates the governmental administration, for no subordinate would arrogate to himself the privilege of "interpret" the spirit of the law handed down by the official of superior status.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

175 178 565 642 645 royal will. A solid foundation for such a class was not possible, however, until the central government had been sufficiently stabilized and expanded. These conditions began to be met under Menelik, who established Addis Ababa in the last decade of the nineteenth century and in 1907 created a number of ministries. Housed in buildings inside the palace compound, the ministries were initially regarded as little more than an ornament to dress up the imperial court. Although men of some stature, like Afa Negus Nasibu and Fitāwrāri Hābta Giyorgis, were named to the posts, the offices themselves did not acquire much prestige. It was no great matter when, five years after the death of Menelik, the ministers were turned out of office by a group of military officers at the instigation of Rās Tafari and sent home to their provincial estates.

175 178 645 647 [652] After becoming emperor himself, however, Haile Selassie revived and enlarged the ministerial system. Since the restoration, it has expanded into a complex bureaucratic structure. In addition to some sixteen ministries, a number of specialized government agencies have been formed, and the military and judicial hierarchies and the diplomatic corps have been considerably expanded. The rapid growth of the central government in the past two decades is reflected in its budgetary expenditures, which went from about US$10 million in 1942 to an estimated US$110 million in 1962.

178 647 571 554 565 The growth of this governmental machinery has provided a new basis for elite status in Ethiopia. Mobility channels now run in terms of appointments in the government bureaucracy. The periodic announcement of appointments by the Emperor has become the focus of public interest in Ethiopia since the liberation. Every new list of appointments provides the occasion for intense gossip and *de rigueur* congratulatory parties at the homes of the favored.

178 565 571 The new class of high governmental functionaries under Haile Selassie may be regarded as a transitional elite: partly traditional, partly modernizing. With regard to basis of recruitment, values represented, and style of life, the new nobility present, on the one hand, a direct continuation of the old nobility; and, on the other hand, many features novel in Abyssinian society.

178 565 [646] To some extent recruitment of members of the new nobility was not a creation of new dignitaries, but rather an absorption of members of the old nobility into the new political organization. The recruitment of *makuānnent* into the senate, which after all is an organ of the central government, may be taken as an ambiguous instance of this. Some others were given important posts in the civil and military administrations. These include members of the princely families of Shoa, Tigre, Wag, Lasta, and Gojjam; the Bakere clan, royalty from the Galla province of Wallaga; and scions of the *makuānnent* who were important in Menelik's day or before, members of aristocratic clans which go by the names of Bēzā, Mojā, Sofanē, and Addisgē. Such persons are likely to have been awarded the old military titles for purely honorific pur-

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

phenomenon, however, the intellectuals are already unmistakably in evidence, and if one contrasts them as a social stratum with the new nobility their outlines become readily visible.

The new nobility came into being in consequence of Haile Selassie's policy of political *centralization*. The status of its members rests on their possession of political influence, measured partly by the strength of their personal followings but primarily by how close they are to the Emperor, and on the Westernized style of life made possible by wealth acquired through political office, rents, and commerce. Its ascendance as a status group may be located approximately in the decade after 1945, the year in which failure of a revolt in Tigre Province marked the end of attempts to assert provincial claims inspired by allegiance to members of the old nobility. The decade was marked by rapid growth of the factors supportive of centralized government and the new nobility: expansion of the bureaucracy, strengthening of the national military force, and economic advance.*

The intelligentsia, by contrast, has come into being in consequence of Haile Selassie's policy of technical *modernization*. The status of its members rests on their possession of secular Western education, status differences within the group depending on the academic degree attained and the prestige of the school attended. The development of the intelligentsia as a counter-elite has its beginnings in the present decade, beginning around 1955, the year of the jubilee celebration of the twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Emperor's coronation. This was a lavishly contrived affair which, occurring at about the time that the first sizable group of postwar college students had returned from abroad, accentuated in their minds a sense of alienation from the *ancien régime*. The present decade is marked by dramatic increase in the number of Ethiopians with college degrees and secondary school certificates, and in the general prestige of education as such in the country. For, it will be remembered, in the late forties the government found it necessary to pay families to get them to send their children to school; whereas by the late fifties, there were far too many applicants for the available places.

The pattern of recruitment of members of the new nobility has been continuous with important elements of the traditional social system. It rests on the belief in the sanctity of the emperor and the legitimacy of his unlimited political authority, and the practice of emperors sometimes to raise to high position men of low background who were *ipso facto* more trustworthy. The personnel of the new nobility, moreover, have in a number of cases been drawn from members of old noble families.

By contrast, the formation of the intelligentsia represents a break with the

* Due largely to trade in coffee, whose export value climbed more or less steadily from Eth$17 million in 1947 to Eth$123 million in 1957.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

But this gentle, paternal control has been backstopped by more rigorous sanctions. Censorship controls assure that anything that is published is highly flattering of the government. Intelligence networks keep intellectuals from speaking their minds and developing them through open exchange with others. Associations have in general not been permitted to form, or else have been saturated with government informers. Coupled with these repressive measures has been the policy of making appointments dependent on the extent to which one curries favor with the Emperor directly, or one of the new nobles who is high in favor at a given time. The intellectuals, no less than the new nobility, have been kept in line by *shum-shĭr* and *divide et impera*. "We have been kept from acting," said one remorseful returnee, "by fear and the sweetness of office."

In the political order sustained by the rule of Haile Selassie, the paramountcy of loyalty to the imperial government as a value has precluded the ascendance of values of national development and technical competence, values it is the peculiar burden of the intelligentsia to bear and assert. In this situation a vicious cycle of mutual mistrust has developed between the government and the intellectuals. Although the articulation of standards and the expression of criticism are important functions of intellectuals, the Emperor has tended to regard all expressions of criticism which reflect on the government, which is his personal government, as expressions of filial ingratitude at best, and at worst as signs of subversion. The intellectuals, in turn, have accepted this definition of the situation and have tended to assume—after some disheartening experiences in the course of the fifties—that is was not plausible for them to express criticism in a framework of basic loyalty to the regime. Distrust fed distrust, and antagonism mounted. The abortive coup d'état of December, 1960, was but the most outspoken and violent expression of this.

This growth of antagonism to the government has seeped down among the students. The feeling has become increasingly widespread among students at home and abroad that genuine service to the nation and the performance of technical functions are incompatible with a loyal and secure existence under the present regime. Thus, one student in a Western country said in 1961: "I am afraid to return to Ethiopia. I fear that I shall either lose all my principles, as so many of my friends seem to have done, or that I shall end up without a job or in prison."

ETHIOPIA'S DILEMMA

Haile Selassie has often proclaimed his devotion to a program of modernization. His personal achievements in this direction have been substantial: the establishment of much modern bureaucratic machinery, the institution of a parliament and electoral procedures, a mild degree of industrialization, and, above all, the provision of a modern secular education for thousands of young people.

11:Levine Z-4,5 (1958-1961)1965 MP5 Amhara MP5

of individuality—loyal criticism toward the government, one's friends, and one's self.

Besides the efforts of those courageous Ethiopians who, in exile abroad or living in inner exile at home, have steadfastly worked to develop their powers of integrity and their capacities of independent judgment, there is but one force that holds any promise of increasing the scope of personal autonomy and creativity in Ethiopia, and that is education. The fate of Ethiopia one and two generations hence is linked, more closely than members of large, industrialized societies can readily appreciate, with a single small institution: the Haile Selassie I University. As pinnacle of the country's educational system, it sets the standards, prepares the teachers, and devises many of the innovations to be used throughout the nation's schools. No less important, its relative independence from the national government gives it a certain leeway to pursue policies based primarily on academic considerations. The Ministry of Education, which administers all other secular schools in the country, is necessarily more subjected to the routine pressures of domestic politics. The university, on the other hand, by virtue of its many expatriate staff members and its dependence on outside financial help, is more intimately tied to international academic standards and practices. While a growing number of qualified Ethiopians have joined its staff, for some time to come the University will necessarily be greatly dependent on assistance from academic men from other countries. In any event, it is likely to remain in continuous contact with the outside world by virtue of its participation in the international community of scholars. This condition may give it a degree of autonomy and insulation that can but further the patient development of Ethiopia's most sorely needed asset: cadres of individuals who can resist the facile slogans of the day and work to provide for Ethiopia's great transformation the benefits of enlightened aims and realistic practices.

634
635 Parish and Hamlet. The highland zones can be di-
*[192] vided along three complementary social dimensions---po-
litical, ecclesiastical, and economic. Politically, the
province is divided into awraja (sub-province), warada
(district of a sub-province), and meketel warada (sub-
632 district). The meketel warada consists of fifteen to
361 thirty parishes (deber). The parish, in turn, is com-
*[192] posed of three to ten hamlets (mender), each consisting
592 of ten to fifty households (bet). Most households con-
sist of husband, wife, unmarried sons, and pre-pubscent
daughters[11]; a minority of households consist of aged
spouses only, or of widowed individuals living by them-
592 selves. Characteristically, the households of a hamlet
361 are dispersed, so that any one is perhaps 100 to 300
meters from its closest neighbors.

• 647 While officials of the provincial and sub-provin-
cial governments are generally out-landers appointed by
the central government, administrators of the warada
and meketel warada are usually members of the local gen-
*[192] try. Within the parish, civil administration is in the
hands of the ceka Sum, a petty administrator who imple-

[582] [11] Since it is common for a girl to marry at 11 or
[591] 12, but to delay the virilocal move until age 15 or 16,
the natal household may include a married daughter.

12:Young E-4,5 (1966) 1971 MP5 Amhara MP5
Begemder

ments decisions that come down from the maketel warada or warada.[12] Incumbency tends to rotate among the senior ristenas of the parish. Amhara trace genealogies ambilineally to the original recipients of primary land rights (rist) to local fields. Ambilineages are traced from these apical ancestory through those descendants (ristenas) who have made effective claims to the fields of the original estates. Over time, it is the genealogical links associated with land claims which tend to be remembered, to the exclusion of other descent ties. Similarly, it is these links which are examined most carefully in deciding whether a proposed marriage would be properly exogamous (i.e., ideally excluding descendants of the sixth ascending generation).[13]

From the perspective of the Amhara peasant, the ecclesiastical organization of Begemder consists of two levels, the bishopric (located in Gondar, the provincial

[12] A feresena, rural policeman, is also a resident farmer of the parish.

[13] Hoben (1963:116-117) considers these matters in detail, and notes that occasionally the boundaries of exogamous unions are contracted to include the descendants of the fifth and even fourth ascending generations.

632
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bar maids.

[463]
[562] A third, numerically significant minority have come from the provinces of Wollo to the east, and from Shoa and those areas still farther south. Local Amhara classify them together pejoratively as "Galla"[18], even [144] though many are in fact true Amhara. Although these "Galla" vary as to physical type, most are indistinguishable from local Amhara, and only a minority are markedly [779] negroid. Most are Copts or Muslims, although a few are • [649] non-Coptic Christians. Most of the men are government employees, generally members of the provincial gendarmerie, which is headquartered in Gondar.

Three additional, numerically small, populations [562] also reside in Gondar. The Agaw are represented mainly [464] by girls and women working as servants for the less affluent townsfolk, and as beer sellers. Of the Nilotes [192] living here, the women work as servants for poor townsfolk, and both sexes haul wood from distant areas for [324] sale in the town's daily wood market (sir gabiya). The very few Falasha in Gondar are iron-mongers.

632
621 Ward and Town. Gondar's residents divide the town

[18] The predominant ethnic group of southern Ethiopia, and, to Gondari Amhara, half-pagan and negroid ("bariya").

as a means for dicusing and strengthening a risteña family's economic and social interests within the parish. There are two conspicuous exceptions. Should a boy bear a physical disability so severe that he will be unable to perform the basic subsistence activities of Amhara men, particularly plowing, he may be enrolled in the parish school as a prelude to a non-agricultural career beyond his natal parish. The alternatives are few. Work as an artisan is appropriate for Muslim and Falasha, but shameful for an Amhara; while employment as a merchant is less objectionable, the peasant is generally without the necessary skills, contacts, and capital; military service is beyond his abilities; thus, only the Church and government remain. Regarding the Church, the priesthood is closed to him, since a priest must be physically whole, and capable of standing unassisted during the performance of the Mass. The remaining ecclesiastical and government career choices assume that a boy will achieve literacy at the parish school and subsequently depart from his natal community. The second exception to the local focus of the parish school, is the small number of boys who are offspring of debtera-teachers serving in parish churches. The ties of these men to their parishes-of-residence are usually only professional, and they are rarely risteñas, it is moreover their professional ethos which influences them to seek an extensive